

VILLAGE CENTER & HISTORIC NODE  
i m p l e m e n t a t i o n p l a n

# NORTH LONG BEACH

FINAL DRAFT JANUARY 2004

FIELD  
PAOLI

LONG BEACH REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY



**NORTH LONG BEACH:  
VILLAGE CENTER AND HISTORIC NODE  
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**FINAL DRAFT  
JANUARY 2004**

**CONTENTS**

**1. Introduction.....3**  
1.1 Purpose & Goals  
1.2 Scope & Process  
1.3 Approach

**2. Village Center.....9**  
2.1 Urban Design Analysis/Site Observations  
2.2 Implementation Strategies  
2.3 Implementation Plan  
2.4 Implementation Plan Schedule

**3. Historic Node.....29**  
3.1 Urban Design Analysis/Site Observations  
3.2 Implementation Strategies  
3.3 Implementation Plan  
3.4 Implementation Plan Schedule

**4. Credits**

**\* See Volume 2 (References & Exhibits)**

# INTRODUCTION

# 1.1 PURPOSE & GOALS

The purpose of the Implementation Plan is to provide the public and the City of Long Beach Redevelopment Agency (Agency) with specific direction towards the establishment of the Village Center along Atlantic Avenue at South Street and the Historic Node along Long Beach Boulevard at Market Street. The Village Center and Historic Node Implementation Plan (Implementation Plan), supplements the observations and recommendations contained within the North Long Beach Strategic Guide for Redevelopment (Strategic Guide) and the North Long Beach Street Enhancement Master Plan (Master Plan). The Implementation Plan strives to present a cohesive and consolidated implementation strategy, both for the Historic Node and for the comprehensive Village Center.

The Strategic Guide provided general goals for each of the two areas in North Long Beach, which were established in conjunction with the North Long Beach Project Area Committee (PAC).

For the Village Center:

"The goal of developing a Village Center is to create a definable unique center for North Long Beach to serve as the focal point for neighborhood identity and activity. The area has the potential to be a mixed-use area: a mix of shopping, restaurants, cafes, and community facilities, with housing located nearby or in the village center itself."

For the Historic Node:

"The structures near the intersection of Long Beach Boulevard and Market Street comprise the Historic Core of North Long Beach and were the original downtown of Virginia City, the name by which North Long Beach was formerly known. The historical significance of the area shall be maintained in its redevelopment and revitalization. The primary focus will be on streetscape enhancements, façade renovations, historic preservation and where possible, the provision of public parking."

The aim of the Implementation Plan is to provide a working document that incorporates the vision of the community, sets concrete goals and priorities for the development of the Village Center and Historic Node and establishes phased actions for implementation. Continual participation by the Long Beach Redevelopment Agency (Agency) and Library staffs, the North Long Beach Project Area Committee (PAC), and the public at large has helped to mould the contents and thrust of this Implementation Plan. The strategies enumerated in this document will assist in the implementation of these vital and active centers for North Long Beach.

# 1.2 SCOPE & PROCESS

## Village Center

The Village Center encompasses an area that stretches from 56<sup>th</sup> to 59<sup>th</sup> Streets, one block on each side of Atlantic Avenue, with South Street in the middle of the focus area. Even though the primary attention will be on this four-block area, the Implementation Plan also examines an additional half block in all directions along Atlantic Avenue and South Street to better define the perimeter of the Village Center and establish a clear transition.

## Historic Node

The Historic Node encompasses parcels bordering both sides of Long Beach Boulevard between 53<sup>rd</sup> and 55<sup>th</sup> Streets and one parcel on the east side only between 59<sup>th</sup> Street and Louise Street.

To arrive at conclusive implementation strategies for these areas, it has been important to understand them in relation to the larger context of current development in North Long Beach and to existing planning documents about the area. This understanding has been achieved through study of the Strategic Guide and the Master Plan, as well as through a series of meetings with the North PAC including the Agency and members of the public. In the formulation of the Implementation Plan, the Field Paoli team worked through a series of steps, each of which culminated in a meeting and presentation. The process included the following steps:

### **Step 1 – Commencement Meeting (April 10, 2003)**

Purpose of an implementation plan, aims and objectives, general scope and method.

### **Step 2 – Second Meeting - First Thoughts and Ideas (May 29, 2003)**

Presentation of site observations and identification of assets and opportunities. Framing of different scenarios and exploration of strategies related to various uses, parking and open space. Identification and exploration of site options for a branch library.

### **Step 3 – Third Meeting – Preferred Directions (August 26, 2003)**

Incorporation of comments received from PAC and Agency staff, delineation of a preferred vision and work towards presentation of a preferred direction that can be taken to the Redevelopment Agency Board, full PAC and the community. Establishment of preliminary priorities and phases for implementation.

### **Step 4 – Prepare Preliminary Draft**

Preparation of preliminary draft and submittal to Agency staff and PAC Steering Committee. Comments and corrections then to be incorporated into the final draft and presentations made to various public bodies including the Redevelopment Agency Board.

### **Step 5 – Present Draft plan ( December 1, 2003 )**

Presentation of preliminary draft Plan to Community Steering Committee.

### **Step 6– Public Meeting (January 24, 2004)**

### **Step 7 – Redevelopment Agency Board Study Session (January 26, 2004)**

### **Step 8 – Special PAC Meeting (January 27th, 2004)**

### **Step 9 – Redevelopment Agency Board Approval (February 2004)**



# 1.3 APPROACH



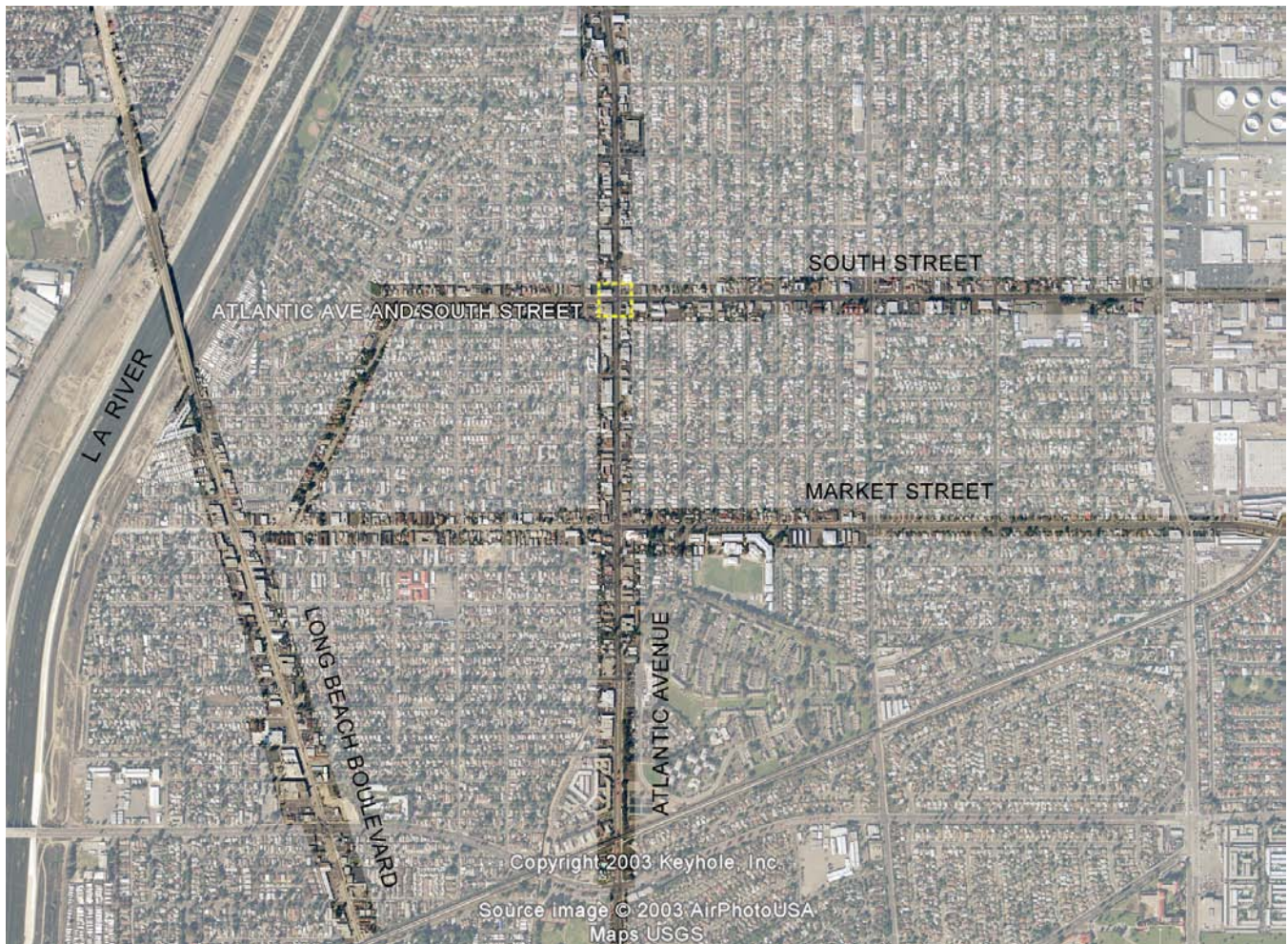
*The Village Center and the Historic Node shown as the centers of North Long Beach*

Two fundamental questions arose at the beginning of the Implementation Plan process. The first question was: How do we distinguish the Village Center and the Historic Node from their surroundings and make them distinct places? Posed in another way: How will you know that you have arrived in either place? The second question was: What are the policies and actions that will strengthen the Village Center and the Historic Node and what plan will make them best serve the North Long Beach community?

An assumption of the Implementation Plan is that the Plan would follow and incorporate recommendations contained within the North Long Beach Strategic Guide for Redevelopment (Strategic Guide) and the North Long Beach Street Enhancement Master Plan (Master Plan). One of the primary recommendations of the Strategic Guide was that the Village Center and the Historic Node are genuine centers for the neighborhoods of North Long Beach and that both should be strengthened and given highest priority for expenditure of resources available for North Long Beach.

Both the Village Center and the Historic Node are located along wide, north-south streets that are continuous commercial corridors, Long Beach Boulevard and Atlantic Avenue respectively. Currently in many parts of Long Beach, wide streets are zoned for continuous commercial land uses and the result has been that the character of the streets are often repetitive and undistinguished in architecture, landscape and signage. Long Beach Boulevard and Atlantic Avenue have such a condition





*Continuous commercial development that currently exists along major streets in North Long Beach*

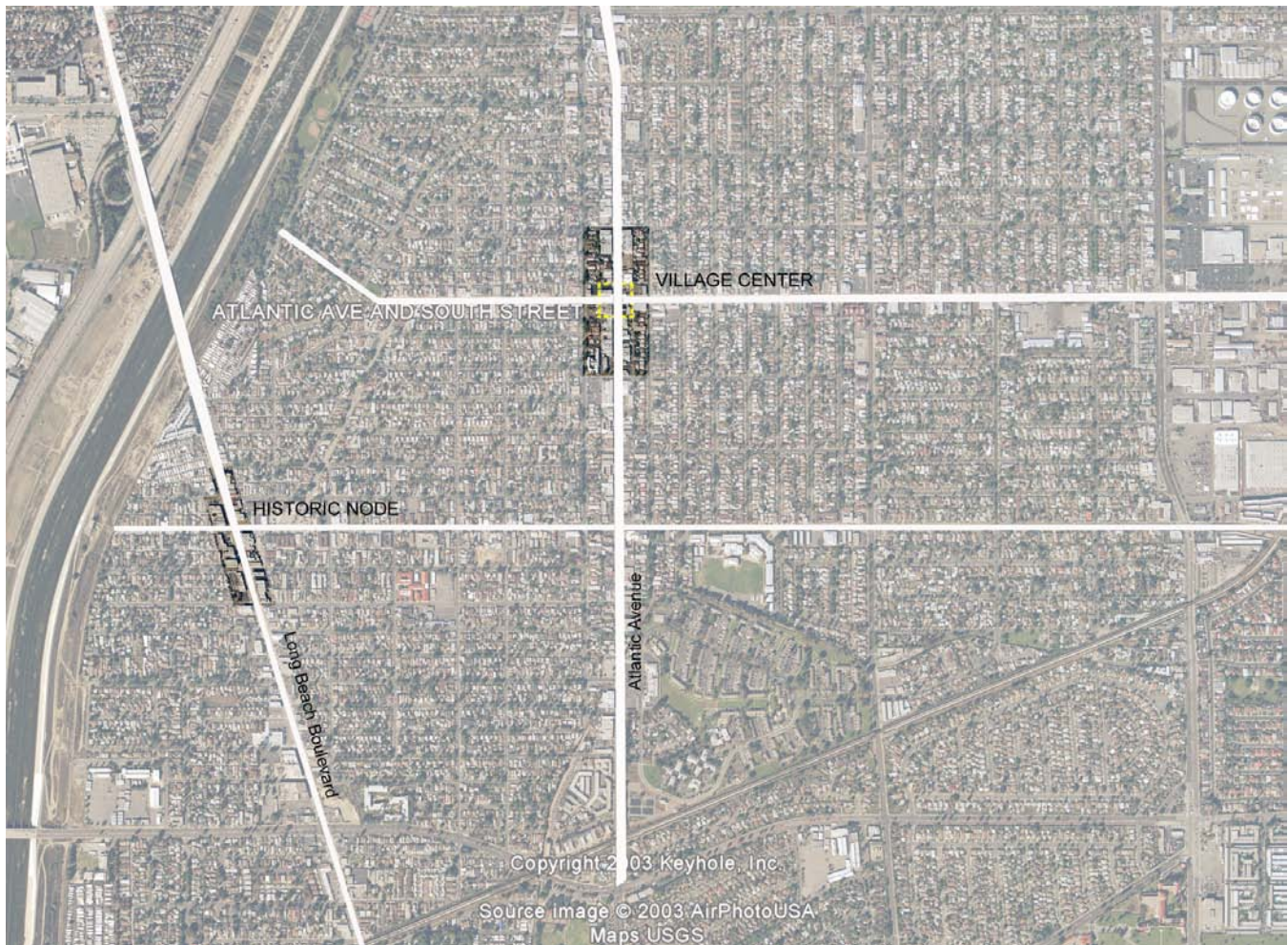
along much of their length. Therefore, critical elements of the Implementation Plan are to concentrate commercial and community uses in the Village Center and the Historic Node, not continuously along all major streets, and to adopt design strategies to recognize and enhance the unique features of the Center and the Node. This may involve relocation of existing successful businesses from along the corridor into the node.

In public meetings, community comments and suggestions were sought as a way of defining uses and features that people wanted to see in these areas.

In order to capture and augment the strengths of the Village Center and Historic Node, the two areas were studied to determine a clear urban design strategy for walkability, streetscape design, traffic patterns, parking locations, building character, and potential sites for infill development. In addition, aspects of implementation include marketing ideas, the possibility of business improvement districts, façade improvement programs, historic recognition and documentation, and other programs.

The Village Center and Historic Node are considered to be the hearts of the community. However, they differ in the sense that the Village Center is intended to be the cultural, commercial and social heart of the larger North Long Beach area, while the





*Historic Node and Village Center are emphasized as the centers of North Long Beach through implementation policies and actions*

Historic Node, which is formed around the preservation of historic buildings, caters primarily to the local needs of its surrounding residents. Physically, the Village Center conjures up an image of two and three - story buildings, tree-lined sidewalks with cafes, small neighborhood shops that cater to local needs, restaurants and other cultural amenities that draw people from the larger North Long Beach Area to the Center. The Historic Node in contrast, conjures up an image of local establishments that serve the needs of the neighboring ethnic community, set in the context of historic buildings amidst an enhanced streetscape. In essence, both the Village Center and Historic Node are intended to be pedestrian environments where buildings open up to the public realm and the continuous rhythm of small buildings and shops make walking a pleasant experience.

Specifically for the Village Center, the programmatic fulcrum on Atlantic Avenue is a branch library and a community center. This dual center is to be complemented by coffee shops, cafes and the numerous small retail establishments that line the street edge along Atlantic Avenue. With restaurants, neighborhood retail, some professional office space, and perhaps residential uses on the upper levels, the mix of activity and buildings could result in a viable, active and successful Village Center for all of North Long Beach.

Specifically for the Historic Node, the major actions for implementation include the preservation and renovation of historic buildings and a streetscape design, which increases walkability on a heavily trafficked Boulevard.